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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/990,263	11/23/2001	Junji Shinohara	2038-281	2420

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EXAMINER

GRAYSON, ANGELA J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3765

DATE MAILED: 03/26/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/990,263	SHINOHARA ET AL.
	Examiner Angela J. Grayson, Esq.	Art Unit 3765

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on Application filed on 11-23-2001.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-4 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 1-4 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 23 November 2001 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 6.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.
2. Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 1, lines 19 and 23 page 26 line 12 disclose, "first both side portions", "second both side portions" and first both side portions respectively. It is unclear what structural features the Applicant is disclosing. Clarification and correction are required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-⁴₃ are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 5,188,627 to Igue.

As to claim 1, Igue discloses a disposable undergarment comprising a front and back waist regions (members 9 and 10), and a crotch region (Figure 3); a pair of leg-openings (member 8) defined at transversely opposite side edge portions of the crotch; stretchable elastic members associated with the leg-openings (Figure 3 member 5) comprising a first elastic member extending substantially in a circular arc from a vicinity

of respective front ends of the transversely opposite side edge portions rearward longitudinally (member 5B); a second elastic member extending substantially in a circular arc from a vicinity of respective rear ends of the transversely opposite side edge portions forward longitudinally (member 5A); and third elastic members extending in the longitudinal direction along said transversely opposite side edge portions between the first and second elastic members (member 5B1; 5A1); said undergarment further comprising said first elastic member having first both sides portions extending in the vicinity of the respective front ends of the transversely opposite side edge portions and a first middle portion extending across said crotch region (Figure 3 5B); said second elastic member having second both side portions extending in the vicinity of the rear ends of said transversely opposite side edge portions and a second middle portion spaced rearward in the longitudinal direction from the first middle portion by a given dimension and extending across the crotch region (Figure 3 member 5A); said third elastic members respectively extending along said transversely opposite side edge portion so as to describe circular arcs which are convex inward transversely and having first connecting portions between said first both side portions and said first middle portion and merged into said first both side portions and second respective branching points between the second both side portions and said second middle portion and merged into said second side portions (Figure 3 5B1; 5A1).

As to claim 2, Igue discloses a disposable undergarment wherein the tensile stress of zones in which said first and second both side portions overlap said first and second connecting portions is higher than that of the remaining zone in which said first

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through third members extend. (From Figure 3 it is disclosed the elastic elements overlap on the ends of the side portions adjacent to the leg-openings and are adhered thereto. It is inherent that the tensile resistance will be higher where there is more adhesion).

As to claim 3, Igue discloses an undergarment wherein the undergarment is a disposable diaper comprising a liquid-pervious topsheet, a liquid-impervious backsheet, and a liquid-absorbent core disposed between these sheets. (Abstract; Figure 3 members 11, 14, 13).

As to claim 4, Igue discloses an undergarment wherein the undergarment is a disposable diaper (Abstract; Figure 3) comprising a liquid-absorbent panel including a core (member 14) disposed between the topsheet and leak-barrier sheet (member 13b) and a liquid-impervious backsheet (member 13a) defining the front and rear waist regions (members 9 and 10) and the crotch region, said panel extending across the crotch region in the longitudinal direction and being joined to inner surface of the backsheet with the leak-barrier sheet lying there between (members 14, (13b, 13a disclosing backsheet laminate), said first and second elastic members being attached to the backsheet, and said third elastic members are attached transversely opposite side edge portions of the panel extending along the transversely opposite side edge portions of the crotch region (Figure 3 members 5A, 5B, 5A1, 5B1, 5A2, 5B2).

Double Patenting

5. The nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In*

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re Goodman, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

6. Claims 1 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-3 of copending Application No. US Patent No. 09/990,262. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because claims 1-3 of 09/990,262 does not recite the additional limitation of having the third elastic members extend along transversely opposite side edge portions forming circular arcs which are convex inward, since it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to modify the third elastic members of the instant case to not include the convex inward design of '262, since such a modification would have involved a mere change in the form or shape of a component. A change in form or shape is generally recognized as being within the level of ordinary skill in the art. *In re Dailey*, 149 USPQ 47 (CCPA 1976).

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. US Patent Nos 6,464,677; 6,201,386; 6,013,065.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Angela J. Grayson, Esq. whose telephone number is 703-305-1806. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 9:30 am to 7:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John J. Calvert can be reached on 703-305-1025. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9302 for regular communications and 703-872-9303 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0873.

Angela J. Grayson
March 20, 2003


A. Vanatta
Primary Examiner